

on parties, cause corruption, and detract from the primary duty of Senators and Representatives to their states and country.

As our soldiers rejoin their families at home we are forced to turn our focus inward. Reform is necessary. It is not a question of when nor is it a question of how. Rather, the question is whether or not we are willing to do what is necessary to save our great country. God bless America.

KAYLEIGH EHLEH-VOCK, SOUTH BURLINGTON
HIGH SCHOOL (RUNNER UP)
[January 23, 2012]

During a time of severe recession, a government facing incredible debt, and a collapsing financial system, our future looks dark. As a student that has been in the system for 13 years, and will continue to higher education, I have seen the benefits and complications of the current situation with education. Next year, I will be attending college and the cost of tuition is daunting. The high cost deters kids from attending college. However, in our world today, a high school diploma no longer ensures a hopeful career. Republicans and democrats alike acknowledge the need to invest in the skill and future of the youth.

Those who choose to continue their education to better themselves and America should not be punished by entering the real world chained down by debt; no one should be at the bottom because they choose to go to college. According to Helen Krispien of The Hopkinton Crier, the cost of private college is approximately 57% of yearly income, and therefore having two children in college is 114% of yearly income. The cost of tuition is expected to increase by 5% per year, leaving those in 15 years with tuition of \$103,946. Reform is needed. Colleges and universities must be required to cut their own costs. They know their budget better than anyone, and like our nation, they need to find a way to balance competition with lowering skyrocketing costs. This will allow for less borrowed education, and less government intervention. Furthermore, revamp colleges in hometowns allowing affordable options for the working class. As a nation, we need to eliminate the interest that banks charge on student loans. Instead, temporary tax breaks should be given to those who have children that have attended college for four years. This will allow for quicker repayment of loans, and will insure a successful future for both the youth and our nation. The government shouldn't be funding the system the way they do now; funding should be used on reform.

Aspiring students see college as an investment into the future; friendships, suitable partners, and a confidence in them. In four years, I don't want to enter into a world of hurt. I want to be a proud American, able to look back and see what this great nation can do to recover from the struggle we are facing. I want my parents to be able to retire; they have worked hard to raise me and my siblings, they deserve what they were promised. I am proud our government is willing to listen, and if we work together as one nation, America can be triumphant and re-establish the high caliber and positive regard we have for much of history.

KATE RASZKA, CHAMPLAIN VALLEY UNION
HIGH SCHOOL (RUNNER UP)
[January 23, 2012]

MY FELLOW AMERICANS: The current state of our nation is one of anticipation; anticipation for the future and what changes will occur in the government regarding both foreign and domestic affairs.

Our country faces many difficulties: a struggling economy, the draining of re-

sources from involvement in foreign conflicts, too few new jobs, environmental degradation, uncertainty about how to pay for health care, and a damaged international reputation because of our handling of suspected terrorists. While we face many difficulties, we can find strength as one union and pursue solutions as a nation.

The United States must continue to lead by example. We should teach the world how to prevent the degradation of our environment. We as a country can promote renewable energy resources. This would create a larger, newer market which in turn would provide many new jobs. We have the power to directly change the future. We must lead the fight to preserve our planet.

It is unfortunate that while our country faces many domestic issues we have been deeply involved in conflicts overseas. However, our involvement in Iraq has led to a more stabilized and democratic country. As we pull out, we leave with a success.

Currently our judicial branch is deciding whether or not the recently passed health care bill violates individual and states' rights. All Americans deserve affordable health care. To be successful our citizens must be able to live without the fear of being unable to provide themselves or their children healthcare. It may be wrong to require all people to buy insurance, but a solution must be found by our esteemed members of Congress in which all seeking citizens will find affordable health care.

The indefinite incarceration of our citizens suspected of terrorist involvement is a wrong that must be corrected. The National Defense Authorization Act is a direct violation of habeas corpus and must be dealt with. I urge the Supreme Court to do so immediately.

The greatest solution to our problems is to make our education system the greatest in the world and prepare our youth for the competitive future. Educating our children will prepare our younger generations to solve new problems that will undoubtedly arise in the future. Currently, our children's test scores fall below other rising nations' scores. With our resources these results are unacceptable. It is time to ensure that all our citizens, particularly those below the poverty line, can attend college. Many of the students with low test scores live in poor environments with few opportunities. The success of our country must be made by building upon our society from the bottom up. It is time to raise our education standards and inspire change among those of us most down trodden.

Thank you and God bless the United States of America.

KAROLINA SOWULEWSKA, BURR AND BURTON
ACADEMY (RUNNER UP)
[January 23, 2012]

MY FELLOW AMERICANS: Our world is rapidly evolving, and we must adapt to it, or be left behind. As a sovereign power, we must lead through example. While progress has been made in three domestic key fronts, America must advance environmentally, economically and educationally.

We must take the first step in saving the environment, or it will not sustain us and our ever expanding nation. America must take initiative; by reducing our dependency on foreign oil, to improve relations abroad, and pursues for Americans at home. This is also an opportunity to create jobs for Americans, through national programs that would emphasize a greener economy, such as lowering the cost of public transportation, cutting gasoline and foreign fuel spending, and creating energy efficient plans for buildings and residential areas. By funding regional

and national projects, we create jobs and take large steps forward towards a low carbon future.

The necessary changes in the environment intertwines with our second key front: education. We need to fund and broaden opportunities ranging from the elementary to university level. More programs with emphasis on environmental service, protection and restoration would prepare the men and women of America to attack real world problems. If the budget for education were to increase, there would be more monetary provisions for grants, payment for teachers and new programs. Projects and research, such as investigating alternative fuel resources, and technological innovations, would not only benefit our environmental front, but would prepare our nation's future for the larger arena they must compete in. Let us not wait for another Sputnik crisis to advance in education and the sciences. We need simply to offer accessible opportunities for higher learning for the variety of people that seek it.

The environmental and educational fronts cannot begin to expand or flourish, without a sturdy and secure economic front. We must also adapt our freestanding market: the debt continues to rise, and the need to invest the American people in their nation increases as well. We must restore the people's faith in the government. Our middle class will strengthen. Unfortunately, this has to be achieved through austerity: budgets must be redistributed to focus on our priorities, such as our three fronts. While the free market begs for stimulus, we must not wane and give in, but offer a firm guiding hand to decrease the national debt. This must begin by focusing our resources on environmental changes, which would be brought forth through advances in educational programs. By becoming less dependent on foreign resources, we not only further invest in our nation and economy, but provide jobs for hard-working Americans.

If the United States is to remain a strong domestic and international power, we must adapt to our current situation and prepare for the upcoming year. We must make significant changes in order to progress. These changes on our three fronts—environment, economy and education—will be difficult, but they are changes that will only benefit us; these are changes we can believe in.●

TRIBUTE TO HAVEN J. BARLOW

● Mr. LEE. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize and congratulate former Utah State Senate President Haven J. Barlow on his recent 90th birthday. He is a true patriot who spent much of his life serving his State and his country, and I thank him for that service.

Haven was born January 4, 1922 in Clearfield, UT to Jesse B. and Issadora Beck Barlow. His mother Issadora was killed in a tragic car/train accident when he was just 9 months old, causing him to learn his share of responsibility at an early age.

After graduating from Davis High School, Haven earned a degree in business administration at Utah State Agricultural College, now Utah State University. He joined the U.S. Navy and attended officer candidate school at Harvard University. He served as a naval supply and disbursement officer in the Pacific and the Atlantic in World War II, receiving the Philippine Liberation Medal.

Haven and his wife Bonnie Rae Ellison Barlow were married for 58 years before Bonnie Rae passed away at age 79. Haven and Bonnie Rae returned to Davis County after World War II, where they reared their six children in Layton.

In 1949, Haven started the Barlow Realty and Insurance Company, and he still checks in daily at the very successful real estate development office.

In 1952, Haven was elected to the Utah State Legislature, where he served consecutively for 42 years from 1953 to 1994, longer than any other legislator in Utah history. He served as President of the Utah State Senate for 6 years.

While serving as a senator and representative for 42 years in the Utah State Legislature, Haven introduced and sponsored a number of pieces of legislation that formulated the landscape in northern Utah. In the field of education, one of Haven's passions, he supported the establishment of then-Weber State College as a 4-year school, Weber State's transition from college to university, and the securing of funding for the Weber State Davis Campus. Today, Weber State boasts over 24,000 students. Haven also supported the bill that turned Utah State Agricultural College into Utah State University.

Haven backed legislation that created the Davis Applied Technology Center, which is now the Davis Applied Technology College. The vocational school trains students in a variety of technologies and skills that can be directly applied to the workplace. Additionally, Haven supported the Ogden-Weber Applied Technology Center, also now a college, which offers similar services to its students.

In 1981, Haven was a proponent of the Hill Aerospace Museum, which was founded that year and is now home to over 90 aircraft. The museum hosted its millionth visitor in 1996, and now has nearly 200,000 visitors annually.

Even given his many accomplishments, there is perhaps nothing more admirable about Haven than his support for charity. He sponsored legislation that created the Utah Botanical Center, home of a "giving garden" which donates all produce to local food banks. He has also donated money and countless hours to the United Way of Salt Lake, and has been known to tell skeptical donors that if they wound up unhappy about their donations, he would pay them back personally. United Way of Salt Lake Regional Director Jim Young has said of Haven, "[His] irrepressibly positive attitude makes him a joy to be around. He has what a colleague of mine calls 'yes, in his heart.' Haven's heart for those around him challenges us to become more involved in our community and make a difference."

The world is a better place because of Haven Barlow. He is an example for all Americans to follow, and I wish him a very happy 90th birthday.●

RECOGNIZING CYR BUS LINES

● Ms. SNOWE. Mr. President, during the past 100 years our country has seen remarkable changes. From horse drawn-carriages to cars and airplanes, and handwritten letters to text messaging, our world has undergone a vast transformation. Few small businesses have had the tenacity to adapt to these changes and continue to prosper, but those who have, deserve our sincerest praise. With this in mind, today I rise to recognize Cyr Bus Lines, located in Old Town, ME, which this year celebrates its 100th anniversary.

When John T. Cyr founded this small transportation firm in 1912, it utilized horses and carriages for transporting everything from timber to passengers. And now, the Cyr name is highly regarded throughout Maine for its elite bus transportation. As the needs of Maine changed, so did the company, shifting from local trucking to expand into school buses and motor coaches to best suit the wishes of its customers. The result of Cyr's successful adaptation has been a flourishing enterprise.

Today, Cyr buses are a familiar sight to numerous school children and parents, serving 17 different school districts across Maine. Additionally, the company offers over 120 guided coach tours, allowing customers a relaxing and informative trip to several destinations. In 2012, these guided tours include routes to popular destinations throughout New England as well as more distant favorites such as Quebec and New Orleans. This year, one could even book a tour aboard a luxurious Cyr bus to visit Washington D.C. during the magnificent cherry blossom season.

Cyr Bus Lines represents a true family-owned small business, which has been handed down throughout generations and is now owned and operated by the founder's grandson, Joe Cyr. Joe took over operations in 1967 from his father, Harvey, and has continually strived to improve the company. As the years have progressed, the fourth generation of the Cyr family has become involved with Joe's son Mike running the coach department and Joe's daughter Becky acting as bookkeeper.

In light of this firm's long-term success, it should come as no surprise that this small business has received several honors recognizing their commitment to safety and quality. Most recently in 2011, Cyr Bus Lines was awarded the International Motor Coach Group, IMG, award for Motor Coach Safety. Further, at the 2011 annual meeting of the Maine Chamber Group Trust, the local provider for workers' compensation insurance, Cyr Bus Lines received honors for both "Most Improved Safety Program" and for "No Indemnity Claims in 2010." Additionally on April 21, 2011, two of Cyr's employees received first place trophies, in the categories of transit school bus and conventional school bus, for their exceptional driving skills at the Maine Association for Pupil Transportation Cen-

tral Maine Conference and School Bus Rodeo.

A century later, Cyr Bus Lines continues to maintain a position of excellence in the community. This small business' tireless and successful efforts to persevere and prosper in a changing environment represent a truly monumental achievement. I am proud to extend my congratulations to the Cyr family and everyone at Cyr Bus Lines on their 100th anniversary. I offer my best wishes for their continued success.●

CENTENNIAL ANNIVERSARY OF THE MAINE ASSOCIATION OF AGRICULTURAL FAIRS

● Ms. SNOWE. Mr. President, I rise today to honor the Maine Association of Agricultural Fairs and to congratulate this venerable organization on 100 years of championing the agricultural fair industry and the agricultural community of Maine.

As the Maine Association of Agricultural Fairs celebrates its centennial anniversary, I would like to take this opportunity to recognize the remarkable progress and strides made by this historic organization in this century and the last. Founded in 1912, the Association served as a vital catalyst in uniting the agricultural fairs across Maine and promoting a shared spirit of fellowship and cooperation.

What was once a welcomed vehicle for local farmers to exchange and showcase their cattle and goods has over many decades evolved into 26 officially licensed agricultural fairs. During Maine's fair season, which starts in July and ends in early October, families can look forward to any number of events that have achieved iconic status, including harness racing, educational museums, the world's largest steer and oxen show, as well as a world-class Woodsmen's Day competition—all of which speak to Maine's legendary work ethic and can-do spirit.

Every one of Maine's storied agricultural fairs has its own persona, tradition, and imprint on the landscape of our State and the unerring character of our people. In fact, just last year I had the privilege of attending two agricultural fairs—the Skowhegan Fair which began in 1818 and, according to the Association, lays claim to being the oldest continuous-running fair in the United States, and the Fryeburg Fair which is considered Maine's largest agricultural fair, attracting more than 300,000 people annually.

In this second decade of the 21st century, the integral role that the Maine Association of Agricultural Fairs and that agriculture itself continue to play in the lives of Mainers could not be more paramount or indispensable. As many of my colleagues in the Senate can attest, and as thousands of Mainers undeniably understand firsthand, the agricultural industry is one of the bedrock foundations of our State and Nation—central both to consumption and commerce.